

IOWA DISTRICT COURT, FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

IN RE: ACCESS TO WARREN
COUNTY COURT FACILITY

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 2020-25

Concerns have been expressed regarding the ongoing operation of the Warren County Court Facility in light of current administrative directives from State Court Administration and the Governor of Iowa in light of the ongoing ramifications of the COVID-19 outbreak and the need to maintain social distancing as a means to mitigate the severity of that outbreak. These concerns are exacerbated by the fact that this facility has been intended to serve as a temporary court facility and does not offer the same options for traffic flow and access as a permanent facility. In order to address these concerns, the following is noted:

1. Litigants and counsel are encouraged to utilize remote appearances and written submissions to the degree possible in order to reduce, if not eliminate, in-person attendance at court proceedings. In particular, litigants should confirm with their attorney (or the clerk, if they are not represented) as to whether their proceeding is going forward as scheduled, and if so, whether it will be by telephone or video conference. In-person attendance should (for now) be the exception, not the rule.
2. Clerks of court and their staff are encouraged to take appropriate measures to reduce, if not eliminate, in-person interaction with the public, including but not limited to the use of drop boxes, online


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payments and encouraging full use by e-filers of the Electronic Document Management System (EDMS).

3. Persons who do not have a court appearance (such as drivers, spectators, family members, etc.) may be asked to leave a courtroom or the court facility if their presence poses a legitimate threat to the mitigation efforts described above, in particular the 10-person limit on gatherings recently put in place by the governor's office. This prohibition does not apply to credentialed members of the media in a case where an expanded media coverage order is already in place.
4. The Warren County Sheriff retains the authority to support and enforce these efforts, including but not limited to refusing access to the court facility to any individual who does not have pending business with the court or the clerk's office, as well as assisting with the removal of any individuals who have been instructed to leave a courtroom or the facility.

Dated this 24th day of March, 2020.



MICHAEL D. HUPPERT, CHIEF JUDGE
FIFTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT OF IOWA

Copies to:
Chief Justice Susan Christensen, Iowa Supreme Court
Liaison Justice Edward Mansfield, Iowa Supreme Court
State Court Administrator, Todd Nuccio
Fifth Judicial District Judges, Staff and
Stakeholders by email